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## **The Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation (HRRF) Condemns Election Related Violence in Rwanda - Calls for Real Democratic Activity to be Allowed**

The Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation (HRRF) deplores the violence occurring over the last several weeks in Kigali, Rwanda. As an organization focusing on the peaceful reconciliation of ongoing conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, HRRF joins with other international voices to call for an end to the violence and human rights abuses.

HRRF Founder and President Paul Rusesabagina said, “We are always saddened by injury and loss of life on all sides. We are particularly upset because THIS violence seems to be linked to the desire of Rwandans for free and fair and real democratic elections. The Rwandan people need the international community to pay attention to these elections, and to condemn the actions of all people, including those affiliated with the government, who are trying to disrupt the election process.”

With the election season underway in Rwanda leading up to the August, 2010 presidential vote, it is increasingly clear that the well-reported suppression of dissent by the Rwandan government is now bubbling up into violence. Various reports have blamed this on internal struggles between factions in the RPF regime, on attempts by the government to discredit opposition parties, and on outside groups. The complete lack of openness in Rwandan society makes the actual culprit very difficult to determine. Unfortunately the current government is just as likely to scapegoat a political foe as they are to seek real justice.

HRRF echoes the call of Amnesty International for the safeguarding of human rights during the election season in its press release entitled: Rwanda: Intimidation of opposition parties must end  
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/rwanda-intimidation-opposition-parties-must-end-20100218>

And, HRRF applauds Human Rights Watch call for an end to election related attacks on opposition  
<http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/02/10/rwanda-end-attacks-opposition-parties>

Further, HRRF agrees with Senator Russ Feingold’s call for increased democracy in Africa.  
<http://feingold.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=322668>

Rusesabagina concluded, “The HRRF continues to work for truth, equal rights, equal justice and eventually reconciliation in Rwanda and the region. Our goal is to prevent the recurrence of the horrific violence that the world saw during the genocide in 1994. It is imperative that the world take notice of the political, social and humanitarian crisis currently facing Rwanda and the region. Without international attention and support to find peace and reconciliation, events like these may be an early sign that we are on the road to another terrible outbreak of mass violence.”

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